

Microfinance Ireland

Report on The Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme As of the 30th of September 2025



An Roinn Fiontar,
Trádála agus Fostaíochta
Department of Enterprise,
Trade and Employment



Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil 
Local Enterprise Office

Overview of the Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme

The Microenterprise Loan Fund, administered by Microfinance Ireland was established as part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs and forms part of a suite of financial programs provided through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to assist businesses of different sizes and at different stages of development across all industry sectors.

The purpose of the Fund is to provide loans of €2,000 up to €50,000 to Micro-enterprises, both startups and existing businesses with viable businesses, who cannot obtain funding through traditional sources. (Microenterprises are defined as businesses with less than 10 employees and /or Turnover <€2m)

Fund Performance Summary: 1st October 2012 to 30th September 2025

As at end 30th September 2025, Microfinance Ireland has been in business for 13 years. In this time, it has delivered the following key results:

- ✓ **13,005** Applications received.
- ✓ **€102M** Value of loans approved
- ✓ **11,825** Net jobs supported in 5,974 micro-enterprises.
- ✓ **46%** Approval rate
- ✓ **€90.7M** Value of loans drawn
- ✓ **5,346** Loans drawn.
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€16.8K**
- ✓ **82%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer**.
- ✓ **43%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 22% of loans granted to Dublin, 78% to the rest of Ireland

Successful applicants by Sector YTD 2025

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES (20%)	ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD ACTIVITIES (11%)
MANUFACTURING (9%)	ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION (9%)
OTHER SERVICES (8%)	HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (8%)
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC & TECH ACTIVITIES (8%)	CONSTRUCTION (7%)
TRANSPORT AND STORAGE (5%)	ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT SERVICES ACTIVITIES (4%)
EDUCATION (6%)	OTHER (3%)
PUBLISHING, BROADCASTING & CONTENT PRODUCTION (2%)	

Assessing applications efficiently:

- ✓ **12,859** Applications processed to full assessment.
- ✓ **146** Applications in progress at reporting date
- ✓ Endeavour to process complete applications within **10 days**.

Promotion and performance of the Fund during 1st January 2025 to 30th September 2025

Key performance indicators YTD 2025

- ✓ **1078** Applications received.
- ✓ **€9M** Value of loans approved
- ✓ **754** Jobs supported in 380 micro-enterprises.
- ✓ **36%** Approval rate
- ✓ **€8.5** Value of loans drawn
- ✓ **352** Loans drawn.
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€24.3K**
- ✓ **82%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer**.
- ✓ **49%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 21% of loans granted to Dublin, 79% to the rest of Ireland.

Key performance indicators Qtr. 3 2025

- ✓ **352** Applications received.
- ✓ **€3.1M** Value of loans approved
- ✓ **213** Jobs supported in 125 micro-enterprises.
- ✓ **36%** Approval rate
- ✓ **€2.8M** Value of loans drawn
- ✓ **118** Loans drawn.
- ✓ Average Loan size of **€24.2K**
- ✓ **87%** approvals granted to businesses employing **3 people or fewer**.
- ✓ **58%** of approvals granted to start-ups (in business for less than 18 months)
- ✓ **Wide geographic coverage:** 22% of loans granted to Dublin, 78% to the rest of Ireland.

During the 3rd quarter of 2025, MFI continued to engage in a range of Marketing and PR initiatives.

Radio Advertising:

We ran a national radio campaign over a number of weeks in August 2025. The MFI ads were featured on national and local stations throughout the country.

Digital Advertising /social media:

We continue with ongoing promotion through our social media channels, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and LinkedIn to maintain strong brand awareness with digital advertising campaigns primarily focussed on Google and Facebook. Our TikTok channel while at an early stage is building momentum. We did a TikTok collaboration with a well known influencer in Q4 and this has brought more subscribers to our TikTok channel.

Events/Webinars/Sponsorships:

We continue our representation at in person events and webinars.

In Q3 we continued our collaboration on webinars with the Local Enterprise Offices which have been well attended.

We continue to have monthly webinars for anyone interested in Microfinance Ireland. These webinars continue to be well attended with good engagement from participants.

The revitalised resource hub on our website is a central repository for helpful information for businesses.

Performance:

Applications in Q3 were steady but slightly below the levels seen in the first 2 quarters. The summer months can be quieter so the slight reduction in application numbers is not uncommon. We had 352 applications in the quarter which compares favourably to the 259 applications in the corresponding period in 2024. The increase in application volume mainly reflects the increase in our maximum loan amount which came into effect in September 2024.

Our approval rate for the quarter at 36% is running below the long-term average but is continuing to be impacted by an increase in applications where not all the documentation is submitted and need to be withdrawn without being assessed. We are also seeing an increase in applications that are outside our eligibility criteria which are also withdrawn prior to assessment. We have an outreach program to encourage and assist applicants submit documentation and are reviewing other methods of assisting applicants with their applications. Our approval rate for loans that are assessed is in the mid 60% which is in line with long term averages.

Start Up's accounted for c. 39% of approvals in the quarter.

In the year to date, applications from Female business owners accounted for over 30% of all applications.

Year to date loans to businesses located outside of Dublin accounted for c. 79% of all loans which is in line with historic numbers.

Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme Analysis

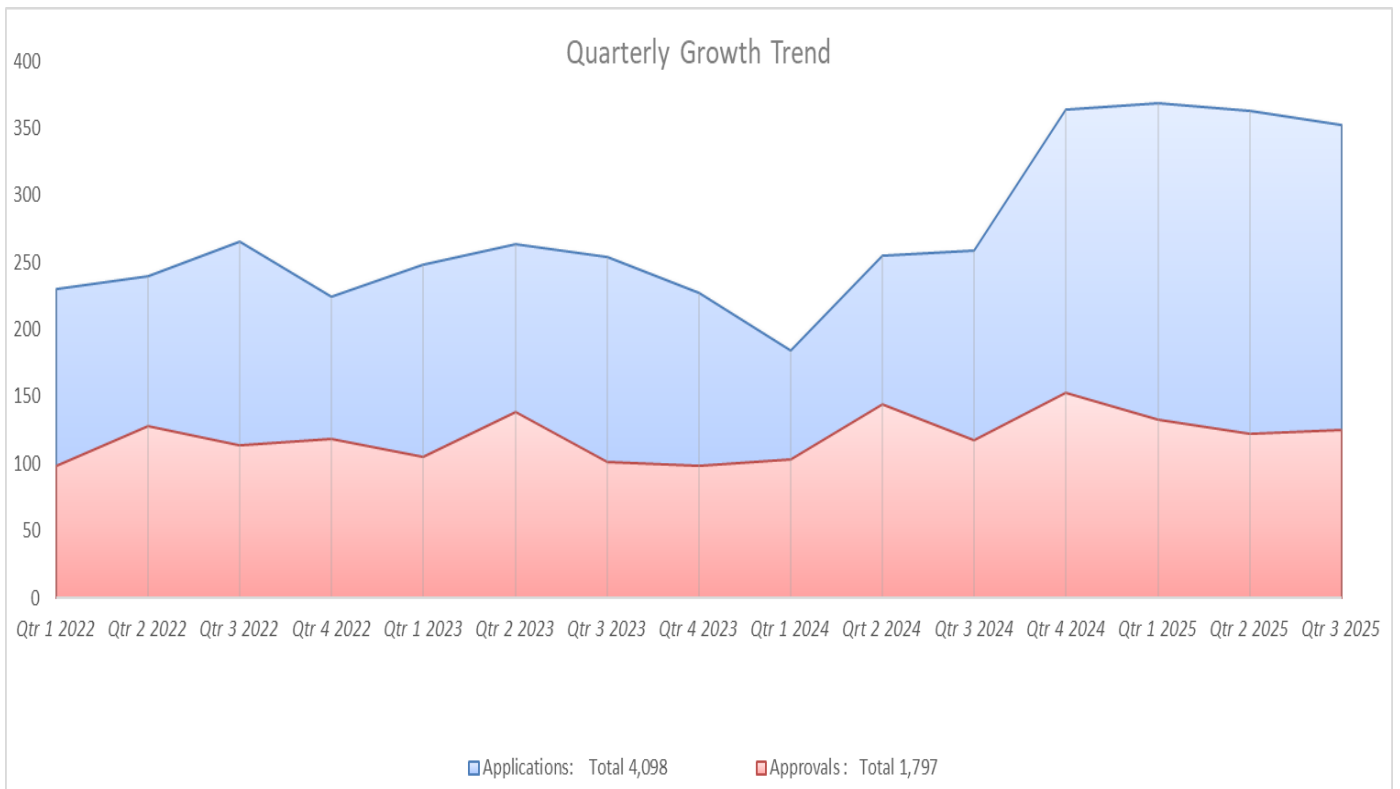
January 2022 – 30th September 2025

	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Total Applications No.	959	994	1062	362	364	352	1,078
Total Applications Amt.	€16.873M	€16.841M	€21,558M	€9.609M	€9.929M	€9.360M	€28.898M

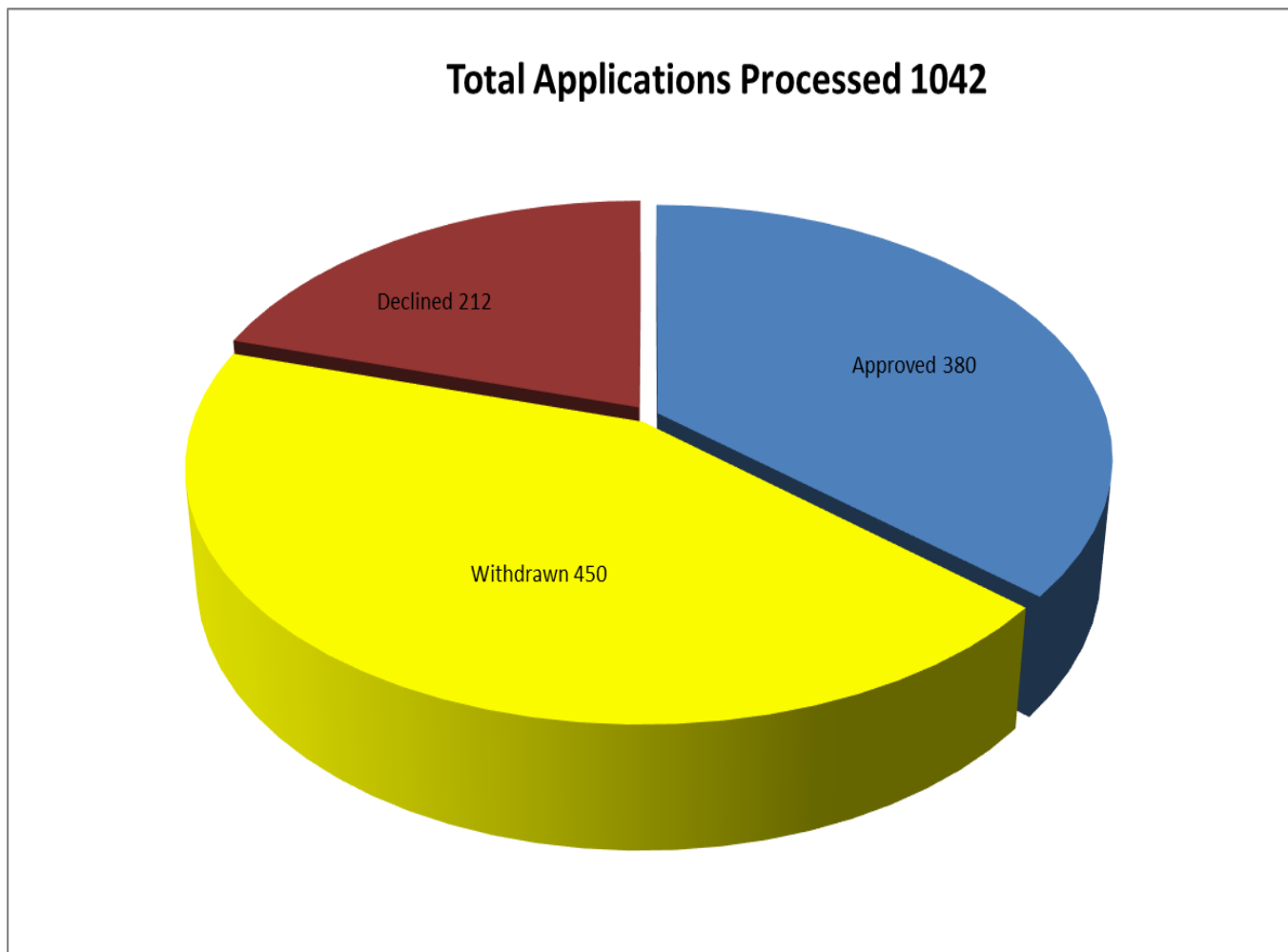
	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Applications Processed	961	965	998	369	335	338	1,042
Approved	458	442	517	133	122	125	380
Approval Rate	48%	46%	52%	36%	36%	37%	36%
Approved (€'000)	€6.931M	€6.600M	€9.099M	€3,206M	€2.821M	€3.087M	€9.114M
Loans Drawn	401	397	450	121	113	118	352
Loans Drawn (€'000)	€6.004M	€6.009M	€7.482M	€2.875M	€2.871M	€2.790M	€8.536M
Loans Declined	335	263	217	60	76	76	212
Loans Declined (€'000)	€6.073M	€4.661M	€4.388M	€1.791M	€2.228M	€2.087M	€6.076M

Quarterly Growth Trend

Application and approval activity levels by Quarter are displayed in the graph below:



Applications processed (1st January 2025 - 30th September 2025)



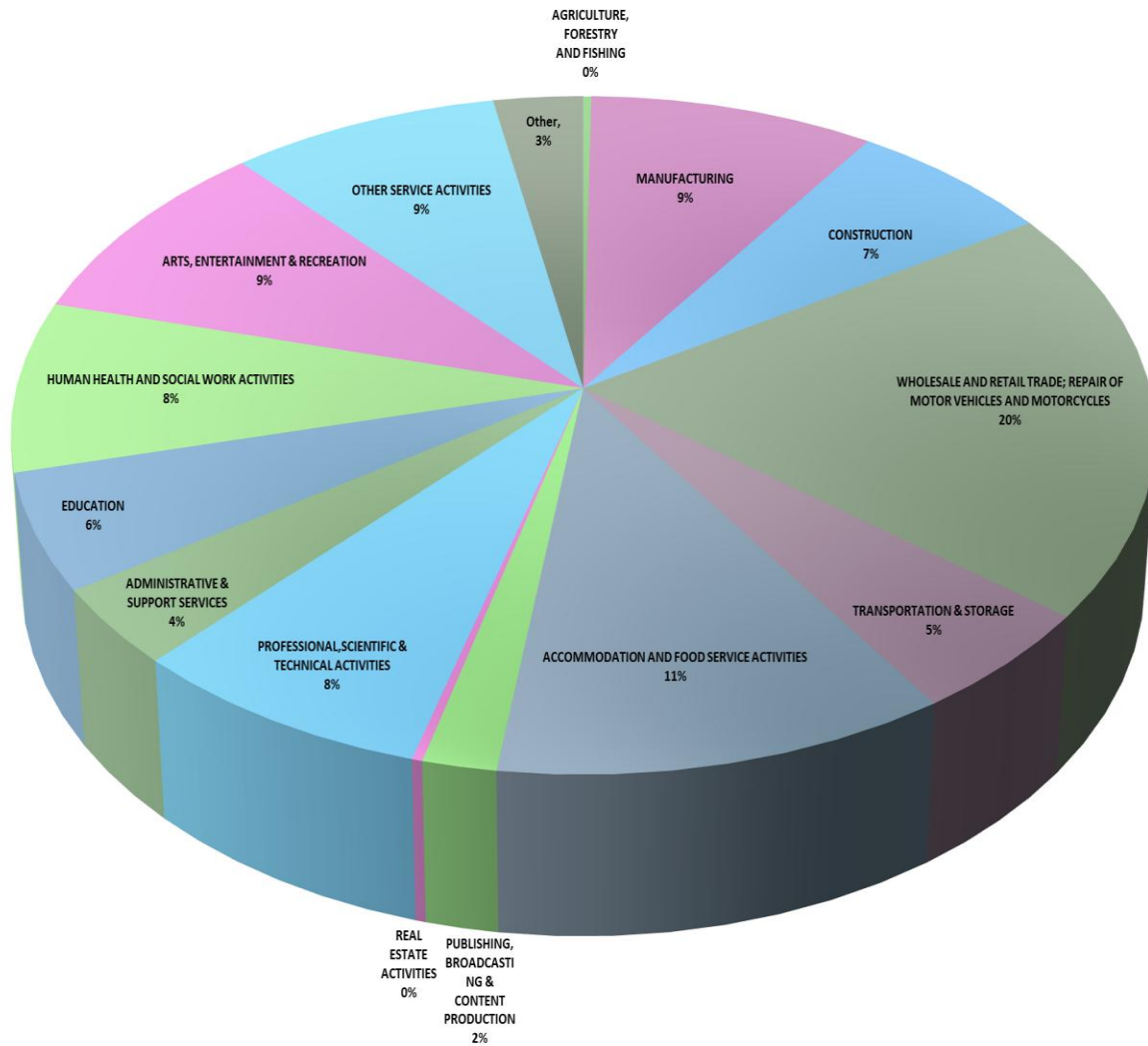
Number of Loans by Sector

Number of Loans							
	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor	96	88	99	31	24	20	75
Accommodation and food service activities	41	32	53	16	10	17	43
Construction	38	26	57	10	10	5	25
Manufacturing	50	49	38	12	13	10	35
Arts, Sports & Recreation	22	26	31	10	12	13	35
Real Estate Activities					-	1	1
Human Health & Social Work Activities	29	34	35	9	13	9	31
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	39	41	46	11	9	9	29
Transport/storage	19	19	32	10	5	4	19
Administrative & Support Service	25	25	24	3	7	4	14
Publishing, Broadcasting, And	22	17	20	4	2	1	7
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	16	12	0	-		1	1
Education	14	19	25	4	4	13	21
Other Service Activities	42	49	53	12	7	14	33
Others	5	5	4	1	6	4	11

Values of Loans by Sector

Value of Loans							
	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor	1452	1434	1711	766	545	469	1,780
Accommodation and food service activities	724	471	1034	445	218	525	1,188
Construction	620	445	1069	256	274	94	624
Manufacturing	759	796	808	303	287	295	885
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	324	402	601	228	286	363	877
Real Estate Activities					0	30	30
Human Health & Social Work Activities	482	435	619	271	297	270	838
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	503	515	713	253	186	249	688
Transport/storage	363	317	692	272	134	138	544
Administrative & Support Service	251	403	386	73	166	95	334
Publishing, Broadcasting, And	367	264	343	75	17	25	117
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	283	187	0	0	0	10	10
Education	158	340	399	51	112	208	371
Other Service Activities	575	516	654	193	84	202	479
Others	70	75	70	20	215	114	349

Loan By Sector YTD



Approvals by Size of Borrower

From 1st January 2022 to 30th September 2025

Loans were approved to micro-enterprises with the following number of jobs at time of approvals:

No. of Employees	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
1	289	327	304	66	58	60	184
2-3	118	84	144	48	37	49	134
4-5	31	13	42	9	14	12	35
6-9	19	18	27	10	13	4	27
10	1	0	0				-
Total No. of Loans	458	442	517	133	122	125	380

Approvals by Loan Size

From 1st January 2022 to 30th September 2025, loans were granted in the following size range

Loans by Size							
Euro	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
≤50k			22	18	13	14	45
≤45k			1	3	1	1	5
≤40k			6	10	9	14	33
≤35k			9	6	8	8	22
≤30k			9	12	13	8	33
≤25k	122	125	130	17	15	18	50
≤20k	79	62	72	16	16	24	56
≤15k	100	93	103	19	17	13	49
≤10k	71	84	89	18	17	16	51
≤5k	86	78	76	14	13	9	36
Average Loan Size	€15.1K	€14.9K	€17.6K	€24.1K	€23.1K	€24.7K	€23.9K

Purpose for which Microfinance Loans were granted.

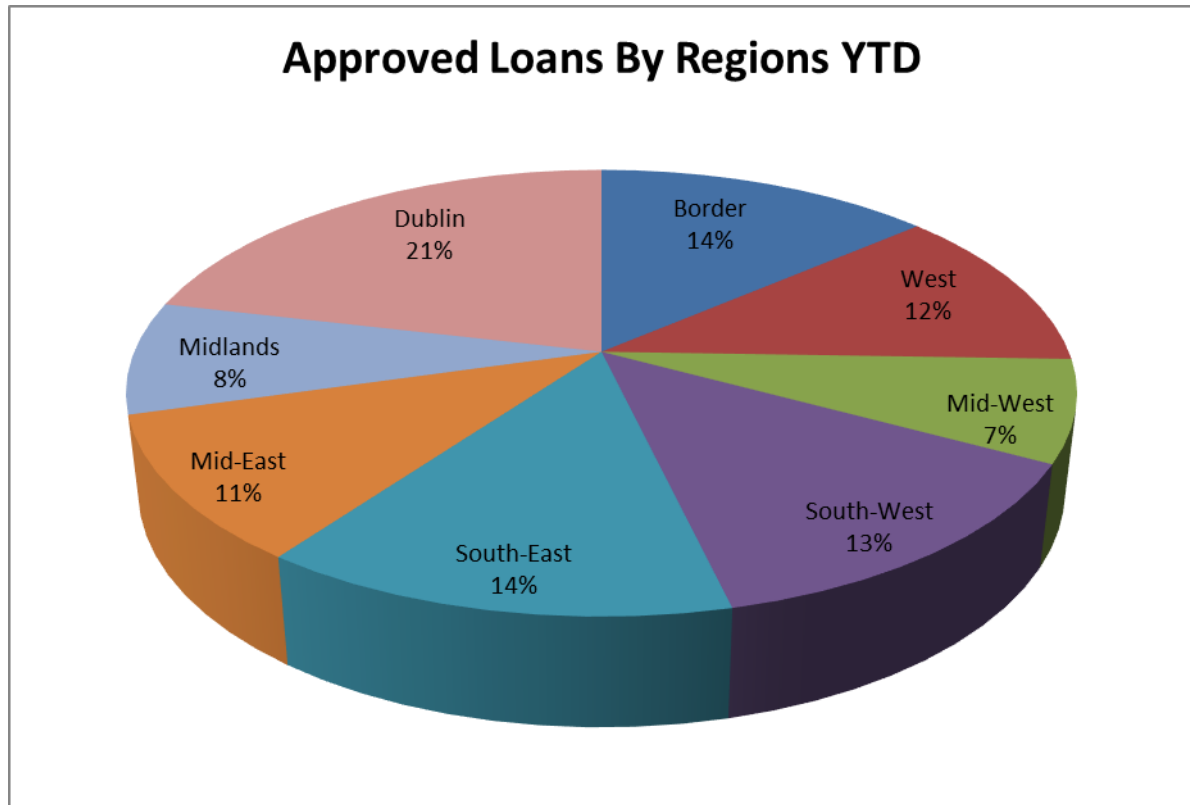
Number of Loans							
Purpose	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Working Capital	136	108	140	31	43	28	102
Tangible and Intangible Assets	138	131	169	51	27	32	110
Mixed Financing for tangible, intangible assests and working capital	127	158	208	51	52	65	168

Value of Loans							
Purpose	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Working Capital	1,980	1,578	2,323	677	1,045	699	2,421
Tangible and Intangible Assets	2,129	2,126	3,037	1,276	697	829	2,802
Mixed Financing for tangible, intangible assests and working capital	1,895	2,305	3739	1,253	1,079	1,559	3,891

Geographical Analysis of Approval – from 1st January 2025 to 30th September 2025

County	Applications Received YTD	Approved Q1	Approved Q2	Approved Q3	Approved YTD	Approved Amount 2025 €000
Dublin	295	25	28	28	81	2,210
Cork	106	19	12	12	43	919
Galway	70	8	8	11	27	687
Meath	65	4	8	8	20	431
Donegal	46	8	8	4	20	587
Tipperary	45	8	4	8	20	398
Kildare	41	4	4	3	11	207
Wexford	40	2	6	4	12	283
Waterford	36	8	2	3	13	324
Wicklow	36	6	1	2	9	176
Limerick	36	3	7	5	15	290
Louth	32	5	5	3	13	323
Kerry	32	2	4	2	8	173
Clare	27	5	4	4	13	309
Mayo	24	4	4	3	11	263
Westmeath	22	4	3	3	10	231
Kilkenny	20	2	0	3	5	110
Offaly	17	3	1	2	6	162
Laois	16	4	4	4	12	279
Carlow	16	0	2	0	2	70
Monaghan	12	2	1	3	6	146
Cavan	10	4	1	1	6	166
Sligo	9	0	3	1	4	97
Roscommon	9	3	0	4	7	113
Leitrim	7	0	2	1	3	94
Longford	5	0	0	3	3	66
Non Eligible Outside Jurisdiction	4	0			0	0

Approval by Business Sector January 2025 to 30th September 2025



Demographical Analysis

Approved Applications	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
Start Up	191	181	239	67	49	72	188
Existing	267	261	278	66	73	53	192
Female	166	168	167	51	50	54	155
Male	292	274	350	82	72	71	225
No. of Ltd Co.	170	157	208	54	56	63	173
No. of Unltd Co.	1						
No. of Sole Traders	273	281	300	73	63	59	195
No. of Partnerships	14	4	9	6	3	3	12
Youth (Aged 18-25)	9	9	16	1	2	2	5

Source of Loan Referrals

Channels	2022	2023	2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Total 2025
LEO	220	222	280	82	76	82	240
Direct	224	214	229	43	40	36	119
Bank	12	3	6	6	6	7	19
Údarás	0	0	0				-
Other	2	3	2	2			2

Appeals Process

The purpose of the Microfinance Ireland appeals process is to support an applicant who wishes to have a review of an MFI decision to declining a loan application.

MFI will appoint an Appeal Assessor to carry out an independent review of the original loan decision. The assessor who was involved in the original decision will not be involved in the appeals process. The outcome of this review is communicated in writing to the applicant within 15 business days of receipt of the written appeal. The credit decision of the Appeal Assessor is independent of MFI management and is final. There have been 34 appeals in 2025 and 8 of these cases have been approved on appeal. These figures are included in the YTD approval figures.

Complaints

4 complaints have been received by the business in 2025

Business Failures

During 2025, 42 businesses of our borrowers have failed. While any business failure is regrettable, it was anticipated from the outset that a not insignificant proportion of projects supported by the Microfinance Ireland might fail. It is a feature of microfinance (given the higher risk profile) that even with strong business supports, failures will occur.

On an ongoing basis, Microfinance Ireland, in conjunction with other agencies, works with every customer at risk to minimise business failure.